Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A[[n]] computer-implemented online vehicle service method comprising:

receiving, at a DMS or vehicle service provider computer, a service inquiry wherein the service inquiry is selected from the group consisting of: a service request, a scheduled maintenance request, and a recall request;

receiving, at the DMS or vehicle service provider computer, input information regarding potential servicing of the vehicle wherein if the service inquiry is a service request, the input information includes information defining vehicle symptoms pertinent to the service request or if the service inquiry is the scheduled maintenance request or the recall request, the input information includes a vehicle identification number or the vehicle make, vehicle model year, and vehicle model wherein the input information is used to determine whether service is advised for the vehicle;

transmitting, from a-the DMS or vehicle service provider computer, a plurality of open appointments, wherein each of the plurality of open appointments is comprised of a preselected date and time based on available appointment dates and times for a vehicle service provider;

instructing displaying of a plurality of selectable dates having available times associated therewith, wherein selection of a selectable date causes further display of all the available appointment times on that date in which an appointment can still be scheduled;

receiving, at a DMS or vehicle service provider computer, an appointment request relating to one of the plurality of open appointments;

transmitting the input information and the appointment request to the vehicle service provider to facilitate the scheduling of the vehicle service appointment; and

storing the ~~vehicle service~~ requested appointment in a memory associated with the DMS or in a vehicle service provider database.

2. (Original) The online method of claim 1 wherein the service inquiry is the service request and wherein the input information defining vehicle symptoms pertinent to the service request includes a vehicle symptom string.

3. (Previously Presented) The online method of claim 2 further comprising determining an at least two symptom probing questions based on the vehicle symptom string.

4. (Original) The online method of claim 3 further comprising transmitting to the customer the at least two symptom probing questions.

5. (Previously Presented)   The online method of claim 4 further comprising transmitting to the vehicle service provider the at least two symptom probing answers to the at least two symptom probing questions.

6. (Original) The online method of claim 1 wherein the service inquiry is selected by the customer.

7. (Original) The online method of claim 1 further comprising receiving available appointment dates and arrival times from the vehicle service provider.

8. (Original) The online method of claim 1 wherein the service inquiry is the vehicle maintenance request and further comprising retrieving a vehicle maintenance schedule for the vehicle based on the input information.

9. (Original)   The online method of claim 1 wherein the service inquiry is the recall request and further comprising determining whether a recall exists for the customer's vehicle based on the input information.

10. (Previously Presented)   The online method of claim 1 further comprising transmitting the input information to the customer prior to transmitting the appointment request.

11. (Currently Amended)   A computer-implemented n online vehicle service method comprising:

receiving, at a DMS or vehicle service provider computer, a service inquiry wherein the service inquiry is selected from the group consisting of: a service request, a scheduled maintenance request, a recall request, and a vehicle status request;

receiving, at the DMS or vehicle service provider computer, input information regarding potential servicing of the vehicle wherein if the service inquiry is a service request, the input information includes information defining vehicle symptoms pertinent to the service request or if the service inquiry is the scheduled maintenance request or the recall request, the input information includes a vehicle identification number or the vehicle make, vehicle model year, and vehicle model wherein the input information is used to determine whether service is advised for the vehicle or if the service inquiry is the vehicle status request, the input information includes an at least last name of a customer checking on the vehicle status wherein the input information is used to determine the vehicle status;

transmitting, from a the DMS or vehicle service provider computer, a plurality of open appointments, wherein each of the plurality of open appointments is comprised of a preselected date and time based on available appointment dates and times for a vehicle service provider;

instructing displaying of a plurality of selectable dates having available times associated therewith, wherein selection of a selectable date causes further display

of all the available appointment times on that date in which an appointment can still be scheduled;

receiving, at the DMS or vehicle service provider computer, an appointment request relating to one of the plurality of open appointments;

~~transmitting the input information and the appointment request to the vehicle service provider to facilitate the scheduling of the vehicle service appointment;~~ and

storing the ~~vehicle service~~requested appointment in a memory associated with the DMS or in a vehicle service provider database.

12. (Previously Presented)   The online method of claim 11 wherein the service inquiry is the vehicle status request and further comprising receiving vehicle status information from the vehicle service provider.

13. (Original) The online method of claim 12 further comprising transmitting to the customer vehicle status information.

14. (Previously Presented)   An online vehicle service system comprising at least one server computer operable serving at least one client computer, the at least one server computer configured to:

(i)   receive a service inquiry wherein the service inquiry is selected from the group consisting of: a service request, a scheduled maintenance request, and a recall request;

(ii)   receive input information regarding potential servicing of the vehicle wherein if the service inquiry is a service request, the input information includes information defining vehicle symptoms pertinent to the service request or if the service inquiry is the scheduled maintenance request or the recall request, the input information includes a vehicle identification number or the vehicle make, vehicle model year, and vehicle model wherein the input information is used to determine whether service is advised for the vehicle;

(iii)   transmit a plurality of open appointments, wherein each of the plurality of open appointments is comprised of a preselected date and time based on available appointment dates and times for a vehicle service provider;

(iv) instruct display a plurality of selectable dates having available times associated therewith, wherein selection of a selectable date causes further display of all the available appointment times in which an appointment can still be scheduled;

(v)   receive an appointment request relating to one of the plurality of open appointments; and

(vi)   store the requested appointment in a memory associated with a dealer management system or in a vehicle service provider database transmit the input information and the appointment request to the vehicle service provider to facilitate the scheduling of the vehicle service appointment.

15. (Original) The online system of claim 14 wherein the at least one server computer is additionally configured to receive available appointment dates and arrival times from the vehicle service provider.

16. (Original) The online system of claim 15 wherein the at least one server computer is additionally configured to transmit a request XML package containing a request for available appointment dates and arrival times to the vehicle service provider and to receive a response XML package containing available appointment dates and arrival times.

17. (Original) The online system of claim 16 wherein the at least one server computer is additionally configured to transmit a request XML package containing the appointment date and arrival time for the vehicle service appointment to a dealer server or dealer middleware server and to receive a response XML confirming the appointment date and arrival time.

18. (Previously Presented)   The online system of claim 14 wherein the service inquiry is the service request and wherein the input information defining vehicle symptoms pertinent to the service request includes a vehicle symptom string.

19. (Previously Presented)   The online system of claim 18 wherein the first computer is additionally configured to determine an at least two symptom probing questions based on the vehicle symptom string and for obtaining at least two symptom probing answers from the customer.

20. (Previously Presented)   The online system of claim 19 wherein the first computer is additionally configured to transmit to the customer an at least two symptom probing questions.